CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method of providing business data in a distributed computer system, comprising the steps of:

5   a)   locating files within said distributed computer system that contain said business data;

    b)   parsing said files to extract said business data; and

    c)   transferring said extracted business data to an interested party.

10   2.   The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of evaluating said files containing said business data to determine a confidence level of finding a subset of said business data.

    3.   The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of evaluating said files containing said business data to determine a confidence level of finding said business data.

    4.   The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of evaluating said files containing said business data to determine a confidence level of finding a set of keywords in said files containing said business data.

    5.   The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located on corporate websites.

25   6.   The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located on magazine websites.

7. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located on newspaper websites.

5 8. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located on press release websites.

9. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located on professional websites.

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10. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located on association websites.

11. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located using a
15 publicly accessible search engine.

12. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located using a custom designed spider.

20 13. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located by selecting one or more links in said computer distributed system.

14. The method as set forth in claim 13, wherein said one or more links are selected based on their proximity to a set of keywords.

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15. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said files are located using a previously generated list of said files.

16. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of evaluating a tense related to said business data.

17. The method as set forth in claim 16, wherein said business data is discarded based on said tense.

18. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said step of locating comprises the step of using one or more tags to locate said files containing said business data.

19. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said step of parsing comprises the step of using one or more tags to extract said business data.

20. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of creating a concordance table of said business data.

21. The method as set forth in claim 20, further comprising the step of rating and bounding said business data.

22. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said step of parsing comprises the step of using inclusion and exclusion characteristics to extract said business data.

23.   The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of normalizing said business data.

24.   The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of eliminating duplicate sets of business data.

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25.   The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of extracting date or time stamps of said files that contain said business data.

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26.   The method as set forth in claim 25, further comprising the step of evaluating said date or time stamps of said files.

27.   The method as set forth in claim 25, further comprising the step of evaluating said date or time stamps with date or time stamps of previously extracted files.

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28.   The method as set forth in claim 25, further comprising the step of updating said business data using said date or time stamps.

20   29.   A program storage device accessible by a computer, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by said computer to perform method steps for compiling business, said methods steps comprising:

(a)   locating files within said distributed computer system that contain said business data;

25   (b)   parsing said files to extract said business data; and

(c)   transferring said extracted business data to an interested party.

30. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of evaluating said files containing said business data to determine a confidence level of finding a subset of said business data.

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31. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of evaluating said files containing said business data to determine a confidence level of finding said business data.

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32. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of evaluating said files containing said business data to determine a confidence level of finding a set of keywords in said files containing said business data.

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33. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located on corporate websites.

34. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located on magazine websites.

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35. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located on newspaper websites.

36. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located on press release websites.

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37.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located on professional websites.

38.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located on association websites.

39.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located using a publicly accessible search engine.

40.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located using a custom designed spider.

41.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located by selecting one or more links in said computer distributed system.

42.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 41, wherein said one or more links are selected based on their proximity to a said of keywords.

43.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said files are located using a previously generated list of said files.

44.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of evaluating a tense related to said business data.

45.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 44, wherein said business data is discarded based on said tense.

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46.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said step of locating comprises the step of using one or more tags to locate said files containing said business data.

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47.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said step of parsing comprises the step of using one or more tags to extract said business data.

10   48.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of creating a concordance table of said business data.

        49.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 48, further comprising the step of rating and bounding said business data.

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50.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, wherein said step of parsing comprises the step of using inclusion and exclusion characteristics to extract said business data.

20   51.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of normalizing said business data.

52.   The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of eliminating duplicate sets of business data.

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53. The program storage device as set forth in claim 29, further comprising the step of extracting date or time stamps of said files that contain said business data.

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54. The program storage device as set forth in claim 53, further comprising the step of evaluating said date or time stamps of said files.

55. The program storage device as set forth in claim 53, further comprising the step of evaluating said date or time stamps with date or time stamps

10   of previously extracted files.

56. The program storage device as set forth in claim 53, further comprising the step of updating said business data using said date or time stamps.

15   57. A computer program product, comprising:

(a)   business data compiled from files located in a distributed computer system, wherein said files are parsed to extract said business data; and

(b)   a computer readable medium that stores said extracted business data.

20   58. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said business data is determined based on a confidence level of finding a subset of said business data in said files containing said business data.

59. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said business data is determined
25   based on a confidence level of finding said business data in said files containing said business data.

60. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said business data is determined based on a confidence level of finding a set of keywords in said files containing said business data.

61. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located on corporate websites.

62. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located on magazine websites.

63. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located on newspaper websites.

64. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located on press release websites.

65. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located on professional websites.

66. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located on association websites.

67. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located using a publicly accessible search engine.

68.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located using a custom designed spider.

69.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located by selecting one or more links in said computer distributed system.

70.　The product as set forth in claim 69, wherein said one or more links are selected based on their proximity to a set of keywords.

71.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said files are located using a previously generated list of said files.

72.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said business data is extracted based on a tense.

73.　The product as set forth in claim 72, wherein said business data is discarded based on said tense.

74.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein one or more tags are used to locate said files containing said business data.

75.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein one or more tags are used to parse said business data.

76.　The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said business data is extracted based on a concordance table.

77. The product as set forth in claim 76, wherein said one or more tags are associated with said business data.

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78. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein business data is extracted using inclusion and exclusion characteristics.

79. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein said business data is normalized using one or more tags.

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80. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein duplicate sets of business data are eliminated.

81. The product as set forth in claim 57, wherein date or time stamps are extracted from said files.

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82. The product as set forth in claim 81, wherein said date or time stamps of said files are evaluated.

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83. The product as set forth in claim 81, wherein said date or time stamps are evaluated with date or time stamps of previously extracted files.

84. The product as set forth in claim 81, wherein said business data is updated using said date or time stamps.

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